

Dennis Avery

State Representative

District 75



How To Reach
Representative

Dennis Avery

RESIDENCE

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ANSWER THE
QUESTIONNAIRE ONLINE

www.state.in.us/R75

The 2000 session is a "short" session, meaning we will begin session January 10 and finish before March 15.

In the short session, each House member may introduce only five pieces of legislation. While we will not re-open the two-year state budget passed earlier this year, the possibility remains that we may fine-tune some of the appropriations outlined in that legislation.

Inside this newsletter is my legislative questionnaire. The questions will provide some details about the topics that may be brought before the legislature. Your opinion is valuable to me as I consider how I will vote.

If you have any concerns or suggestions for change in your state government, please contact me at 1-800-382-9842.

1999 tax cuts total \$672 million



I am very proud to have voted for the 1999 biennial state budget, which provides \$672 million in savings for Indiana taxpayers. I have detailed some of the tax cuts below.

Homeowners: Property taxes on a taxpayer's principal place of residence can be deducted up to \$2,500. The deduction is located on Schedule 1 of the IT-40.

Senior citizens: The income tax deduction for most seniors was increased from \$1,000 to \$1,500. Each

qualified taxpayer may take this deduction, which means married couples may now deduct \$3,000 from their adjusted gross income. Many seniors also received an increase in the property tax deduction from \$1,000 to \$2,000.

Dependent children: The income tax deduction was increased from \$1,000 to \$2,500 for dependent children under age 19 and full-time students under age 24. You may reduce your Indiana adjusted gross income for each qualifying dependent.

Renters: The renters' income tax deduction was increased from \$1,500 to \$2,000. This deduction is located on Schedule 1 of the IT-40 or the back of the IT-40EZ.

Small businesses: Businesses will no longer have to "add-back" property taxes deducted on their federal returns.

Inventory tax cuts: The inventory tax was eliminated for 87 percent of Indiana farms and businesses, saving \$129.6 million.

Property tax cuts: The county welfare funds and the county welfare administration funds were eliminated from local property taxes, saving \$67.6 million.

Financial assistance for college

Attending college is a key factor for later career success. Indiana's future depends on good students who graduate from college. Students interested in attending or returning to college may be eligible for several sources of additional funding.

- *Twenty-First Century Scholars* helps Indiana families afford a college education for their children. To apply for the program, the student must be an Indiana resident, be enrolled in the 8th grade at a public or accredited private school, and be eligible for free or reduced-price lunches under the national school lunch program, or free or reduced textbooks under the textbook assistance program. For more information, call 1-800-992-2076.
- The State of Indiana also offers several scholarships including the *Indiana Higher Education Grant*, the *Hoosier Scholarship Award*, the *Minority Teacher Scholarship* and the *Nursing Scholarship*. For more information on these scholarships, please contact the State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana at 1-317-232-2350.
- The U.S. government also assists students in finding funds for college. Grants (which do not have to be repaid) and loans (which do have to be repaid) are available for eligible students. The programs include Stafford Loans, Pell Grants, PLUS Loans, the Work-Study Program and Perkins Loans. Students must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Forms are available in high school guidance offices, college financial aid offices or by contacting the U.S. Department of Education at 1-800-4FED-AID.
- Most Indiana universities also have their own financial aid package to encourage students to attend or return to college. Call each college's Admissions or Financial Aid office for an explanation of its program.

Reassessment -- how will it affect you?

Last December the Indiana Supreme Court ruled that the property assessment guidelines used in the collection of property taxes were unconstitutional because different types of property were not treated equitably. The Court mandated the State Tax Board to develop new guidelines based on "objectively verifiable data."

I supported a bill to delay the reassessment. This would have allowed the board time to work out a good program. This also would have given the legislature time to review the guidelines and ease the shift to reassessment.

The reassessment will not increase the money generated by property taxes, but it shifts the burden among taxpayers. While one taxpayer may see an increase, another taxpayer will have a decrease.

The new assessment guidelines, mandated by the Indiana Supreme Court, will affect property tax bills starting in 2002. The guidelines are based on "market-value assessments" and are predicted to shift more of the burden to residential taxpayers and away from businesses.

I am working to find alternative approaches which will ease the burden for homeowners. The State Tax Board has discussed several options, including phasing in the property tax increases, rather than raising them all at once, as well as increasing the homestead credit or delaying the reassessment.

Evansville receives \$29 million for new State Hospital

The Indiana General Assembly gave bonding authority to construct a \$29 million new Evansville State Hospital. I also created an Evansville State Hospital Advisory Committee to decide the use of the surplus properties vacated by the new construction.

We have received many suggestions and ideas on the use of the old buildings and parklike grounds. Please mention any of your suggestions of what could be done in the "comment" section on the next page.

2000 Legislative Survey

Questions

1. Should Indiana eliminate the ISTEP program for testing students, and come up with another method of gauging progress in the classroom?
2. Do you believe the Indiana General Assembly should create a permanent commission to set salaries for elected officials, including the governor and members of the Legislature?
3. Financial inducements to businesses often transfer the tax burden to homeowners and farmers. Do you believe inducements like enterprise zones and tax abatements are an effective use of tax dollars to spur economic development?
4. Do you support passage of legislation that would allow people to have their names placed on a list that would prohibit local telemarketers from calling them?
5. Should the Legislature delay the implementation of new property assessment guidelines created by the State Board of Tax Commissioners that will shift the property tax burden to homeowners when they take effect?
6. Do you believe Indiana should pass legislation creating license plates that benefit "right-to-life" and "pro-choice" causes?
A. Both B. "Right-to-life" only C. "Pro-Choice" only D. Neither
7. Do you favor passage of "hate crime" legislation that increases penalties against people who commit crimes against someone solely because of race or sexual orientation?
8. Indiana presently ranks 48th in the nation in the amount of workers compensation benefits provided to workers injured while on the job. Should injured workers be compensated at higher rates?
9. Should the State of Indiana provide funding to school corporations that choose to offer a full day of kindergarten?

Responses

Respondent 1

Respondent 2

1.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
6.	A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>
	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Your Comments

Place
Stamp
Here

Rep. Dennis Avery
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Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786

2000 Page Program

Serving as a page during the 2000 session allows any child age 13 or older the opportunity to gain a firsthand glimpse of how the legislative system works. Students will be excused from school on the day they are serving as a page and will spend the entire day at the Statehouse.

Interested students should send me their name, parent or guardian's name, address, phone number, school and two different dates when the student could come to the Statehouse between January 10 and February 29, 2000.

Please remember session is short and places fill up fast, so apply as soon as possible.

Our mission is to create an environment for Indiana's youth that is conducive to both fun and learning, and which will stimulate student interest in government and community involvement. To that end, we plan to educate students regarding legislative processes; to give students an opportunity to meet their community leaders; to encourage student involvement in the community; and to introduce students to other students around the state.

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this mailing correct?**

Please check the address label on this mailing for accuracy. If there are any errors or if you are receiving duplicate mailings, please contact my office at 1-800-382-9842. Every effort will be made to correct the mistake.

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